

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "While most of the 1965 Voting Rights Act is permanent law, I am delighted that the temporary sections were extended in a bipartisan vote of 390-to-33 for another 25 years and the clarifying amendments were passed without revision. But we must complete the work of democracy by adding a voting rights amendment to the Constitution, as I have proposed in H.J. Res. 28, which already has 60 co-sponsors.

"There were three critical provisions in H.R. 9, the "*Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006*."

Sections 4-5, the pre-clearance provisions, set a formula and require approval by the U.S. Justice Department or the Federal District Court in Washington, DC, of any new voting practices or procedures in jurisdictions with a history of discrimination in voting. Section 203 ensures that American citizens with limited English proficiency get the assistance necessary for casting a ballot. Sections 6-9 authorize the Attorney General to appoint federal election observers when there is evidence of attempts to intimidate minority votes at the polls.

"The Voting Rights Act does not give Americans an *individual citizenship RIGHT TO VOTE* in the Constitution because our voting system is built on the constitutional foundation of the 10th Amendment - states' rights! The Supreme Court made this clear in *Bush v. Gore*

(2000): 'The individual citizen has no federal constitutional right to vote for electors for the president of the United States unless and until the state legislature chooses a statewide election as the means to implement its power to appoint members of the Electoral College.'

"Therefore, in many ways the 1965 Voting Rights Act is misnamed. It should have been named the "Non-Discrimination In Voting Act" for it doesn't provide for a "right to vote" *per se*, only a "right to vote without racial discrimination

." President Lyndon B. Johnson signed it into law on August 6, 1965, making it the *implementing legislation for the 1870 ratified Fifteenth Amendment (95 years later)*.

That amendment outlawed discrimination in voting on the basis of race. The 19th and 26th amendments do the same on the basis of sex and age.

"In light of certain recent Supreme Court decisions involving complex and technical matters - especially *Georgia v. Ashcroft* and a case out of Bossier Parrish in Louisiana - H.R. 9 included a lengthy hearing record and amendments to make certain the Court is clear about congressional intent so that the law will not be declared illegal when it is challenged in court, as

it almost certainly will be." Jackson concluded.